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LaRouche Savors Fame That May Ruin Him

The New York Times

Lyndon H. LaRouche Jr.

The following article is based on reporting by Robin Toner and Joel Brinkley and was written by Miss Toner.

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 3 — Since his emergence from obscurity two weeks ago, Lyndon H. LaRouche Jr. has used his newfound prominence to promote his extremist theories, clearly relishing the national attention that Democratic leaders hope will destroy his chances of mainstream support.

The upset victories of two LaRouche candidates in last month's Illinois Democratic primary have brought him a barrage of national attention unlike anything his movement has experienced in its 20-year odyssey from the far left to its present eccentric positions, which defy description in conventional political terms.

Building on that attention, Mr. LaRouche, a self-proclaimed economics expert who has gained a tiny percentage of the vote in three Presidential candidacies, hopes with his followers to retail his philosophy to farmers, blue-collar workers and members of minority groups.

Democratic leaders, stunned by the Illinois results, say they believe voters cast their ballots unaware of the candidates' connections to Mr. Larouche and such LaRouche beliefs as that the Queen of England is a drug dealer and that Henry A. Kissinger is a Soviet "agent of influence."

"Their nominations were not the result of voting by an informed electorate," a recent memorandum from the Democratic National Committee said.

He Sees Important Change

Fearing similar results elsewhere, party leaders say they have begun a major "education" program to warn the electorate, believing that the scrutiny being given to Mr. LaRouche and his theories will quickly wither whatever political support he has.

But in a telephone interview this week — his organizaton would not permit a personal interview — Mr. LaRouche contended that a sea change in American politics was under way, with a new receptivity among the voters to his philosophy and his movement.

In the LaRouche world view, gleaned from his comments, speeches and literature, Lyndon LaRouche was a figure of national and international prominence long before the Illinois primary, so prominent that he believes himself to be the target of assassination plots from a wide variety of forces from around the world.

Yet mainstream political leaders have long considered him no more than an eccentric nuisance; LaRouche followers have repeatedly been accused of harassing his perceived enemies, charges Mr. LaRouche denied.

Wesley McCune, director of Group Research Inc., which studies extremist groups, said the LaRouche organization "couldn't have gotten a better break than to have all this outrage" following the Illinois primary. "They've never before gotten so much press, so much media," he said. "Groups like that don't care what you say about them. They can tell their followers: 'Look at what the media, the Rockefellers, and all the others are doing to me, your great leader.' "

Mr. LaRouche has announced his fourth run for the Presidency and says he can see no one else on the horizon who can do the job. His political organization says "LaRouche Democrats" is a term "which threatens to become as widely used as 'F.D.R. Democrats,' 'Kennedy Democrats,' or 'Jefferson Democrats.' "

Mr. LaRouche's followers say more than 780 candidates are running for office this year under the aegis of the LaRouche organization, although they refuse to release a list. In the interview, Mr. LaRouche said he believed 1986 might be the breakthrough year for his philosophy.

But while some of the candidates running under the LaRouche banner are longtime supporters, others indicate they know little about the movement's philosophy and positions. One, a United States Senate candidate from Iowa, said he became involved with Mr. LaRouche's organization, the National Democratic Policy Committee, because he assumed it was an affiliate of the national Democratic Party. There is no connection.

Some Standard Issues, Some Bizarre Theories

At first glance, the issues emphasized by Mr. LaRouche's political group, such as supporting the idea of a space-based defense against missile attacks, seem a normal part of the political debate.

In recent speeches and articles, Mr. LaRouche urges a return to traditional moral values, warns of a Soviet military buildup, assails drug trafficking and expresses a deep confidence in the progress of science and technology. His political group has placed a particular focus on the outbreak of AIDS, urging a program of mandatory mass testing and the quarantining of those who suffer from the acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

In the interview, Mr. LaRouche said such issues as AIDS, crime and economic distress were attracting increasing numbers of blue-collar workers, farmers and minorities to him.

But behind these and other themes that might raise few eyebrows at a meeting of conservatives is a constellation of conspiracy theories, articulated in language far beyond the normal bounds of political discourse.

Asked if he believed that Queen Elizabeth II was knowingly involved in drug trafficking, for example, Mr. LaRouche said, "Of course she is."

He also argues that a variety of forces are plotting to kill him. In the interview he said the K.G.B., the Soviet security agency, was "on my tail." He said Mr. Kissinger, the former Secretary of State, had "run operations against me, and these have been operations that involved assassination threats and assassination potentialities."

British intelligence has also worked against him, Mr. LaRouche said, and numerous others have plotted to kill him. Asked about these accusations, he said, "You can't put them all in the same — they are not all part of one coherent plot." But, he added, "in each case where we name someone, there is a basis for it." Now, he said, "I have got Colombian drug pushers and some others — there's a hit out against me."

The opening sentence of his autobiography, published in 1979, said that "the most powerful adversary available to anyone in the Western World has not only expressed a wish for my early demise" but "has set into motion specialized capabilities of an assassination-relevant sort."

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